

Public Law 102-250  
102d Congress

An Act

To provide emergency drought relief to the Reclamation States, and for other purposes.

Mar. 5, 1992  
[H.R. 355]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Act:

- (1) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.
- (2) The term "Federal Reclamation laws" means the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388) and Acts supplementary thereto and amendatory thereof.
- (3) The term "Federal Reclamation project" means any project constructed or funded under Federal Reclamation law. Such term includes projects having approved loans under the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 (70 Stat. 1044).

Reclamation  
States  
Emergency  
Drought  
Relief Act of  
1991.  
Conservation.  
Disaster  
assistance.  
43 USC 2201  
note.  
43 USC 2201.

TITLE I—DROUGHT PROGRAM

SEC. 101. ASSISTANCE DURING DROUGHT; WATER PURCHASES.

43 USC 2211.

(a) CONSTRUCTION, MANAGEMENT, AND CONSERVATION.—Consistent with existing contractual arrangements and applicable State and applicable Federal law, and without further authorization, the Secretary is authorized to undertake construction, management, and conservation activities that will minimize, or can be expected to have an effect in minimizing, losses and damages resulting from drought conditions. Any construction activities undertaken pursuant to the authority of this subsection shall be limited to temporary facilities designed to minimize losses and damages from drought conditions, except that wells drilled to minimize losses and damages from drought conditions may be permanent facilities.

(b) ASSISTANCE TO WILLING BUYERS AND SELLERS.—In order to minimize losses and damages resulting from drought conditions, the Secretary may provide nonfinancial assistance to willing buyers in their purchase of available water supplies from willing sellers.

(c) WATER PURCHASES BY BUREAU.—In order to minimize losses and damages resulting from drought conditions, the Secretary may purchase water from willing sellers, including, but not limited to, water made available by Federal Reclamation project contractors through conservation or other means with respect to which the seller has reduced the consumption of water. Except with respect to water stored, conveyed or delivered to Federal and State wildlife habitat, the Secretary shall deliver such water pursuant to temporary contracts under section 102: *Provided*, That any such con-

tract shall require recover of any costs, including interest if applicable, incurred by the Secretary in acquiring such water.

(d) WATER BANKS.—In order to respond to a drought, the Secretary is authorized to participate in water banks established by a State.

Contracts.  
43 USC 2212.

**SEC. 102. AVAILABILITY OF WATER ON A TEMPORARY BASIS.**

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In order to mitigate losses and damages resulting from drought conditions, the Secretary may make available, by temporary contract, project and nonproject water, and may permit the use of facilities at Federal Reclamation projects for the storage or conveyance of project or nonproject water, for use both within and outside an authorized project service area.

(b) SPECIAL PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO TEMPORARY WATER SUPPLIES PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION.—

(1) TEMPORARY SUPPLIES.—Each temporary contract for the supply of water entered into pursuant to this section shall terminate no later than two years from the date of execution or upon a determination by the Secretary that water supply conditions no longer warrant that such contracts remain in effect, whichever occurs first. The costs associated with any such contract shall be repaid within the term of the contract.

(2) OWNERSHIP AND ACREAGE LIMITATIONS.—Lands not subject to Reclamation law that receive temporary irrigation water supplies under temporary contracts under this section shall not become subject to the ownership and acreage limitations or pricing provisions of Federal Reclamation law because of the delivery of such temporary water supplies. Lands that are subject to the ownership and acreage limitations of Federal Reclamation law shall not be exempted from those limitations because of the delivery of such temporary water supplies.

(3) TREATMENT UNDER RECLAMATION REFORM ACT OF 1982.—No temporary contract entered into by the Secretary under this section shall be treated as a "contract" as that term is used in sections 203(a) and 220 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-293).

(4) AMENDMENTS OF EXISTING CONTRACTS.—Any amendment to an existing contract to allow a contractor to carry out the provisions of this title shall not be considered a new and supplemental benefit for purposes of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-293).

(c) CONTRACT PRICE.—The price for project water, other than water purchased pursuant to section 101(c), delivered under a temporary contract entered into by the Secretary under this section shall be at least sufficient to recover all Federal operation and maintenance costs and administrative costs, and an appropriate share of capital costs, including interest on such capital costs allocated to municipal and industrial water, except that, for project water delivered to nonproject landholdings, the price shall include full cost (as defined in section 202(3) of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-293; 96 Stat. 1263; 43 U.S.C. 390bb)). For all contracts entered into by the Secretary under the authority of this title—

(1) the interest rate used for computing interest during construction and interest on the unpaid balance of the capital costs expended pursuant to this Act shall be at a rate to be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury based on aver-

age market yields on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States with remaining periods to maturity of one year occurring during the last month of the fiscal year preceding the date of execution of the temporary contract;

(2) in the case of existing facilities the rate as authorized for that Federal Reclamation project;

(3) in the absence of such authorized rate, the interest rate as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury as of the beginning of the fiscal year in which construction was initiated on the basis of the computed average interest rate payable by the Treasury upon its outstanding marketable public obligations which were neither due nor callable for redemption for fifteen years from date of issue: *Provided*, That for all deliveries of water for municipal and industrial purposes from existing facilities to nonproject contractors, the rate shall be as set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(d) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—The Secretary may make water from Federal Reclamation projects and nonproject water available on a nonreimbursable basis for the purposes of protecting or restoring fish and wildlife resources, including mitigation losses, that occur as a result of drought conditions or the operation of a Federal Reclamation project during drought conditions. The Secretary may store and convey project and nonproject water for fish and wildlife purposes, and may provide conveyance of any such water for both State and Federal wildlife habitat and for habitat held in private ownership. The Secretary may make available water for these purposes outside the authorized project service area. Use of the Federal storage and conveyance facilities for these purposes shall be on a nonreimbursable basis. Water made available by the Secretary in 1991 from the Central Valley Project, California, to the Grasslands Water District for the purpose of fish and wildlife shall be nonreimbursable.

(e) NONPROJECT WATER.—The Secretary is authorized to store and convey nonproject water utilizing Federal Reclamation project facilities for use outside and inside the authorized project service area for municipal and industrial uses, fish and wildlife, and agricultural uses. Except in the case of water supplied for fish and wildlife, which shall be nonreimbursable, the Secretary shall charge the recipients of such water for such use of Federal Reclamation project facilities at a rate established pursuant to section 102(c) of this Act.

(f) RECLAMATION FUND.—The payment of capital costs attributable to the sale of project or nonproject water or the use of Federal Reclamation project facilities shall be covered into the Reclamation Fund and be placed to the credit of the project from which such water or use of such facilities is supplied.

#### SEC. 103. LOANS.

43 USC 2213.

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to make loans to water users for the purposes of undertaking construction, management, conservation activities, or the acquisition and transportation of water consistent with State law, that can be expected to have an effect in mitigating losses and damages, including those suffered by fish and wildlife, resulting from drought conditions. Such loans shall be made available under such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems appropriate: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall not approve any loan unless the applicant can demonstrate an

ability to repay such loan within the term of the loan: *Provided further*, That for all loans approved by the Secretary under the authority of this section, the interest rate shall be the rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury based on average market yields on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States with periods to maturity comparable to the repayment period of the loan. The repayment period for loans issued under this section shall not exceed fifteen years. The repayment period for such loans shall begin when the loan is executed. Sections 203(a) and 220 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 and sections 105 and 106 of Public Law 99-546 shall not apply to any contract to repay such loan. The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives in writing of any loan which the Secretary intends to approve not less than thirty days prior to granting final approval.

43 USC 2214.

**SEC. 104. APPLICABLE PERIOD OF DROUGHT PROGRAM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The programs and authorities established under this title shall become operative in any Reclamation State only after the Governor or Governors of the affected State or States, or on a reservation, when the governing body of the affected tribe has made a request for temporary drought assistance and the Secretary has determined that such temporary assistance is merited, or upon the approval of a drought contingency plan as provided in title II of this Act.

State listing.

(b) **COORDINATION WITH BPA.**—If a Governor referred to in subsection (a) is the Governor of the State of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or Montana, the Governor shall coordinate with the Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration before making a request under subsection (a).

(c) **TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.**—The authorities established under this title shall terminate ten years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**TITLE II—DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

43 USC 2221.

**SEC. 201. IDENTIFICATION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER SUPPLY CONSERVATION, AUGMENTATION AND USE.**

The Secretary is authorized to conduct studies to identify opportunities to conserve, augment, and make more efficient use of water supplies available to Federal Reclamation projects and Indian water resource developments in order to be prepared for and better respond to drought conditions. The Secretary is authorized to provide technical assistance to States and to local and tribal government entities to assist in the development, construction, and operation of water desalinization projects, including technical assistance for purposes of assessing the technical and economic feasibility of such projects.

Indians.

43 USC 2222.

**SEC. 202. DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLANS.**

The Secretary, acting pursuant to the Federal Reclamation laws, utilizing the resources of the Department of the Interior, and in consultation with other appropriate Federal and State officials, Indian tribes, public, private, and local entities, is authorized to prepare or participate in the preparation of cooperative drought contingency plans (hereinafter in this title referred to as "contin-

gency plans”) for the prevention or mitigation of adverse effects of drought conditions.

#### SEC. 203. PLAN ELEMENTS.

43 USC 2223.

(a) **PLAN PROVISIONS.**—Elements of the contingency plans prepared pursuant to section 202 may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:

- (1) Water banks.
- (2) Appropriate water conservation actions.
- (3) Water transfers to serve users inside or outside authorized Federal Reclamation project service areas in order to mitigate the effects of drought.
- (4) Use of Federal Reclamation project facilities to store and convey nonproject water for agricultural, municipal and industrial, fish and wildlife, or other uses both inside and outside an authorized Federal Reclamation project service area.
- (5) Use of water from dead or inactive reservoir storage or increased use of ground water resources for temporary water supplies.
- (6) Water supplies for fish and wildlife resources.
- (7) Minor structural actions.

(b) **FEDERAL RECLAMATION PROJECTS.**—Each contingency plan shall identify the following two types of plan elements related to Federal Reclamation projects:

(1) Those plan elements which pertain exclusively to the responsibilities and obligations of the Secretary pursuant to Federal Reclamation law and the responsibilities and obligations of the Secretary for a specific Federal Reclamation project.

(2) Those plan elements that pertain to projects, purposes, or activities not constructed, financed, or otherwise governed by the Federal Reclamation law.

(c) **DROUGHT LEVELS.**—The Secretary is authorized to work with other Federal and State agencies to improve hydrologic data collection systems and water supply forecasting techniques to provide more accurate and timely warning of potential drought conditions and drought levels that would trigger the implementation of contingency plans.

(d) **COMPLIANCE WITH LAW.**—The contingency plans and plan elements shall comply with all requirements of applicable Federal law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321), section 715(a) of the Water Resource Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2265(a)), and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and shall be in accordance with applicable State law.

(e) **REVIEW.**—The contingency plans shall include provisions for periodic review to assure the adequacy of the contingency plan to respond to current conditions, and such plans may be modified accordingly.

#### SEC. 204. RECOMMENDATIONS.

43 USC 2224.

(a) **APPROVAL.**—The Secretary shall submit each plan prepared pursuant to section 202 of the Congress, together with the Secretary's recommendations, including recommendations for authorizing legislation, if needed.

(b) **PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION.**—A contingency plan under subsection (a) for the State of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or Montana, may be approved by the Secretary only at the request of the Governor of the affected State in coordination with the other States



in the region and the Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration.

43 USC 2225.

**SEC. 205. RECLAMATION DROUGHT RESPONSE FUND.**

The Secretary shall undertake a study of the need, if any, to establish a Reclamation Drought Response Fund to be available for defraying those expenses which the Secretary determines necessary to implement plans prepared under section 202 and to make loans for nonstructural and minor structural activities for the prevention or mitigation of the adverse effects of drought.

43 USC 2226.

**SEC. 206. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRANSFER OF PRECIPITATION MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY.**

(a) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary is authorized to provide technical assistance for drought contingency planning in any of the States not identified in section 1 of the Reclamation Act (Act of June 17, 1902, 32 Stat. 388), and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and upon termination of the Trusteeship, the Republic of Palau, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(b) **TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM.**—The Secretary is authorized to conduct a Precipitation Management Technology Transfer Program to help alleviate problems caused by precipitation variability and droughts in the West, as part of a balanced long-term water resources development and management program. In consultation with State, tribal, and local water, hydropower, water quality and instream flow interests, areas shall be selected for conducting field studies cost-shared on a 50-50 basis to validate and quantify the potential for appropriate precipitation management technology to augment stream flows. Validated technologies shall be transferred to non-Federal interests for operational implementation.

**TITLE III—GENERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

43 USC 2241.

**SEC. 301. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

Except as otherwise provided in section 303 of this Act (relating to temperature control devices at Shasta Dam, California), there is authorized to be appropriated not more than \$90,000,000 in total for fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1996.

43 USC 2242.

**SEC. 302. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.**

The Secretary is authorized to perform any and all acts and to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary and appropriate for the purpose of implementing this Act. In carrying out the authorities under this Act, the Secretary shall give specific consideration to the needs of fish and wildlife, together with other project purposes, and shall consider temporary operational changes which will mitigate, or can be expected to have an effect in mitigating, fish and wildlife losses and damages resulting from drought conditions, consistent with the Secretary's other obligations.

California.  
43 USC 2243.

**SEC. 303. TEMPERATURE CONTROL AT SHASTA DAM, CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT.**

The Secretary is authorized to complete the design and specifications for construction of a device to control the temperature of

water releases from Shasta Dam, Central Valley Project, California, and to construct facilities needed to attach such device to the dam. There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the authority of this section not more than \$12,000,000.

Appropriation  
authorization.

**SEC. 304. EFFECT OF ACT ON OTHER LAWS.**

43 USC 2244.

(a) **CONFORMITY WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW.**—All actions taken pursuant to this Act pertaining to the diversion, storage, use, or transfer of water shall be in conformity with applicable State and applicable Federal law.

(b) **EFFECT ON JURISDICTION, AUTHORITY, AND WATER RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as expanding or diminishing State, Federal, or tribal jurisdiction or authority over water resources development, control, or water rights.

**SEC. 305. EXCESS STORAGE AND CARRYING CAPACITY.**

Contracts.  
43 USC 2245.

The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts with municipalities, public water districts and agencies, other Federal agencies, State agencies, and private entities, pursuant to the Act of February 21, 1911 (43 U.S.C. 523), for the impounding, storage, and carriage of nonproject water for domestic, municipal, fish and wildlife, industrial, and other beneficial purposes using any facilities associated with the Central Valley Project, Cachuma Project, and the Ventura River Project, California, the Truckee Storage Project, and the Washoe Project, California and Nevada. The Secretary is further authorized to enter into contracts for the exchange of water for the aforementioned purposes using facilities associated with the Cachuma Project, California.

**SEC. 306. REPORT.**

43 USC 2246.

There shall be included as part of the President's annual budget submittal to the Congress a detailed report on past and proposed expenditures and accomplishments under this Act.

**SEC. 307. FEDERAL RECLAMATION LAWS.**

43 USC 2247.

This Act shall constitute a supplement to the Federal Reclamation laws.

Approved March 5, 1992.

**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 355:**

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 102-21, Pt. 1 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 102-185 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:**

Vol. 137 (1991): Mar. 21, considered and passed House.

Oct. 31, considered and passed Senate, amended.

Nov. 27, Senate receded from its amendment with another amendment.

Vol. 138 (1992): Feb. 19, House concurred in Senate amendment.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 28 (1992):

Mar. 5, Presidential statement.